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HERCULES UNCHAINED

Mighty Hercules battles
man-eating tigers
and an enemy army
to save a
besieged kingdom!

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Joseph E. Levine

presents

STEVE REEVES

in

HERCULES UNCHAINED

with

SYLVA KOSCINA—SYLVIA LOPEZ

PRIMO CARNERA

produced by **BRUNO VAILATI**

directed by **PIETRO FRANCISCI**

LUX-GALATEA LUX FRANCE PRODUCTION

EASTMAN COLOR by PATHE DYALISCOPE

Distributed by WARNER BROTHERS

Tricked into captivity by a wily Queen...

Hercules regains his freedom through his great strength...

...Only to discover that his beloved Jole is the prisoner of a madman.

To save her Hercules must fight his way past a tiger's jaws...

...And topple the towers of a mighty kingdom...

HERCULES UNCHAINED

OFF THE SHORES OF ANCIENT GREECE THE LEGENDARY SHIP ARGOS COMES TO ANCHOR AS THE MIGHTY HERCULES ENDS HIS WANDERING...

RAISE OARS! DROP ANCHOR!

LAERTES, ARGO, CASTOR-- FAREWELL TO YOU ALL! I WILL NEVER FORGET THE ADVENTURES WE ARGONAUTS SHARED TOGETHER!

BUT NOW IT IS TIME TO RETURN TO THEBES-- MY NATIVE CITY!

YOU BRING TO THEBES THE MOST BEAUTIFUL WOMAN IN JOLCO-- YOUR WIFE, JOLE!

ONE LAST WORD ABOUT MY SON, ULYSSES! TEACH HIM TO FOLLOW YOUR FOOTSTEPS! MAKE HIM A MAN FIT TO RULE ITHACA IN MY PLACE SOME DAY!

I WILL TREAT HIM LIKE MY OWN SON, LAERTES!

HERE! ***WHAT'S THAT*** YOU'RE PUTTING IN THE CART?

PIGEONS! IF YOU EVER NEED HELP, TIE A MESSAGE TO THE LEG OF ONE OF THESE BIRDS! HE WILL BRING IT TO ME!

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WAIT! THOSE ARE ***MY PIGEONS!*** PENELOPE, MY BETROTHED, GAVE THEM TO ME AS A ***GIFT!***

TRUE! BUT THESE PIGEONS ARE ***TRAINED TO FLY BACK*** TO ITHACA WHENEVER THEY ARE RELEASED!

AND AS THE CART BEGINS ITS JOURNEY...

FAREWELL, HERCULES! A GOOD JOURNEY, JOLE! ULYSSES, REMEMBER TO HEED HERCULES' TEACHING!

GOOD-BYE, MY FATHER!

THEBES IS A DAY'S JOURNEY FROM HERE! BY TOMORROW WE'LL SEE A REAL CITY--THE CITY OF MY BIRTH! THE PEOPLE OF THEBES HAVE COURTESY AND MANNERS!

JUST THEN--

SOLDIERS! THEY'RE FORCING US OFF THE ROAD!

COUGH! COUGH!

THERE ARE THEBAN MANNERS FOR YOU!

THOSE ***WEREN'T*** THEBAN SOLDIERS! THEY'RE ARGIVES! BUT WHAT ARE THEY DOING HERE SO CLOSE TO THEBES?

ARGIVES HAVE A BAD REPUTATION! THEY LIVE ON ***WAR*** AND THRIVE ON ***MASSACRES!***

BUT THEIR ***COMMANDER*** --HE WORE THE ***ARMOUR OF A THEBAN!*** I SUPPOSE WE'LL FIND OUT WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT WHEN WE GET TO THE CITY!

LATER THAT DAY--AS HERCULES DOZES BACK IN THE CART...

HO, THERE! **NO ONE** PASSES THROUGH THIS VALLEY WITHOUT THE PERMISSION OF **ANTAEUS!**

TO USE THIS ROAD YOU MUST PAY A **HEAVY PRICE!** I'LL TAKE YOUR HORSES **FIRST!** THEN I'LL SEARCH YOUR WAGON FOR **GOLD!**

HERCULES! **WAKE UP!** HERCULES, **WE'RE IN TROUBLE!**

STAND **ASIDE,** BOY! DON'T TRY TO INTERFERE WITH ME!

SO YOU'LL MATCH YOUR STRENGTH AGAINST A **STRIPLING?**

NOW TRY YOUR MUSCLES AGAINST A **MAN!**

THOUGH ANTAEUS LANDS WITH TERRIFIC IMPACT, HE LEAPS, TO HIS FEET, UNHURT...

HE'LL GIVE US NO MORE TROUBLE!--BY THE GODS! HE'S ON HIS FEET AGAIN!

HERCULES! WATCH OUT!

YOU HAVE JUST BEGUN TO FEEL MY STRENGTH, LITTLE MORTAL!

BUT WITH A SUDDEN DEFT MOVE HERCULES BREAKS THE HOLD AND TURNS THE TABLES...

THAT SHOULD FINISH HIM!

THUMP!

THUNDERBOLTS OF ZEUS! NO ONE COULD SURVIVE THAT FALL! BUT HE'S GETTING UP **AGAIN!**

HERCULES!--ANTAEUS IS THE SON OF THE **EARTH GODDESS!** HE GETS STRONGER EACH TIME HE TOUCHES HIS **MOTHER,** THE **EARTH!**

THEN I'LL HAVE TO **CHANGE** MY WAY OF **FIGHTING!**

HO, THERE! WHAT ARE YOU **DOING?** PUT ME **DOWN!**

PANIC SEIZES THE GIANT AS HIS FEET LEAVE THE GROUND...

LET ME **GO,** CURSED STRANGER! PUT ME **DOWN** OR I'LL BREAK YOU IN **HALF!**

BUT WITH EVERY SECOND ANTAEUS GROWS WEAKER UNTIL...

DOWN... LET ME...TOUCH ...EARTH!

HE'S HAD ENOUGH NOW! HE'S TAKING LEAVE OF HIS SENSES!

THAT COLD STREAM SHOULD REVIVE HIM!

AND NOW LET US CONTINUE OUR JOURNEY! WE'VE GOT A LONG WAY TO GO TO REACH THEBES!

BUT BEFORE LONG--A SUDDEN STORM!

HERCULES--WE'LL HAVE TO FIND SHELTER SOMEWHERE!

WE'LL FIND IT IN THAT FOREST JUST AHEAD! I PLAYED THERE AS A BOY! THEY SAY THE GATES OF INFERNO ARE HIDDEN AMONG THOSE TREES!

LOOK--A CAVE!

GET UNDER SHELTER WHILE I COVER THE HORSES!

BUT BEFORE JOLE CAN REACH THE CAVE...

I *THOUGHT* I HEARD SOMEONE NEAR THE CAVE ENTRANCE! LOOK WHAT WE'VE GOT HERE, COMMANDER ANFIRAO!

A GIFT FROM THE GODS! I DIDN'T KNOW THESE THEBAN GIRLS COULD BE SO PRETTY!

LET ME *GO! HERCULES, HELP!*

IT'S JOLE! SHE'S IN TROUBLE!

LET HER GO!

CLOUT!

HE KNOCKED DOWN OUR COMMANDER, ANFIRAO!

PUT BACK YOUR SWORD, FOOL! THAT WAS HERCULES! HE COULD WIPE OUT OUR WHOLE TROOP, SINGLE-HANDED!

THOSE SOLDIERS NEEDED THAT LESSON IN MANNERS, HERCULES!

QUIET! I HEAR VOICES!

THERE BEFORE THEM A WEIRD DRAMA UNFOLDS...

ASK NO HELP FROM ME, POLYNICES! YOU AND ETEOCLES, MY OWN SONS, ***STOLE MY KINGDOM!*** NOW I WILL REMAIN HERE IN MY ASYLUM UNTIL I DIE!

IT'S OEDIPUS, KING OF THEBES!

MY EYES SEE ONLY DARKNESS, BUT MY EARS RECOGNIZE THE VOICE OF MY FAITHFUL FRIEND, HERCULES!

OEDIPUS! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE? YOU SHOULD BE IN ***THEBES!***

POLYNICES, WHO KNEELS BEFORE YOU HERE,-- HE AND HIS BROTHER PERSUADED ME TO LEAVE THE THRONE!

POLYNICES AND ETEOCLES AGREED THAT EACH WOULD RULE THEBES IN TURN FOR ***ONE YEAR!***

IT'S ***MY TURN*** TO RULE NOW, BUT ETEOCLES ***DROVE*** ME FROM THEBES!

AND NOW THIS SCHEMER WANTS ME TO HELP HIM SEIZE THE THRONE -- WITH THE AID OF THE ARMY OF THE ARGIVES!

THE ARGIVES! THEY WOULD *DESTROY* THEBES! ITS PEOPLE WOULD BE SLAIN, THE CITY LOOTED!

POLYNICES, I WILL NOT PERMIT MY NATIVE CITY TO BE DESTROYED! I'LL GO TO ETEOCLES AND CONVINCE HIM TO RESPECT YOUR PACT!

VERY WELL! I GRANT YOU SIX DAYS TO MAKE PEACE BETWEEN US!

SIX DAYS! AFTER THAT I MARCH WITH MY ARGIVE ARMY *AGAINST THEBES!*

AND NOW THE EERIE DRAMA COMES TO A CLOSE AS A VOICE FROM THE DEPTHS SUMMONS THE OLD KING...

THE TIME HAS *COME*, OEDIPUS! THE GATES ARE *OPENING* FOR YOU!

FAREWELL, OEDIPUS!

THE NEXT DAY HERCULES ARRIVES AT THE GATES OF THEBES...

WE'LL GO STRAIGHT TO THE KING'S PALACE! I MUST SPEAK TO ETEOCLES AT ONCE!

BUT AT THE PALACE...

HERCULES, WAIT! THE KING GAVE ORDERS! HE DOESN'T LIKE TO BE DISTURBED WHEN HE'S WATCHING HIS TIGERS!

STAND ASIDE, CREON! I HAVE A MESSAGE THAT WON'T WAIT!

HERCULES! YOU MUST HAVE A REALLY IMPORTANT MESSAGE OR YOU WOULDN'T DARE DISTURB ME NOW!

ETEOCLES, I BRING WORD FROM YOUR BROTHER, POLYNICES!

POLYNICES! I SHOULD HAVE THROWN HIM TO MY TIGERS! HSST! QUIET NOW, THIS IS THE BEST PART OF THE PERFORMANCE!

THE PERFORMANCE ENDS BUT AS THE LAST TIGER LEAVES THE PIT, SUDDENLY...

ARRRRRR!

THE TRAINER-- HE'S DEAD, YOUR HIGHNESS!

BAH! YOU CAN'T FIND A CAPABLE TRAINER, ANY MORE!

WELL, HERCULES, WHAT DOES MY BROTHER WANT?

HE WANTS YOU TO SHARE THE THRONE WITH HIM OR HE MARCHES ON THEBES WITH THE ARGIVE ARMY!

AND I'M SUPPOSED TO DISAPPEAR AND RETURN IN A YEAR-- IF MY BROTHER FEELS LIKE IT!

SO, HE'S HIRED THE ARGIVE ARMY! HM! WITHOUT ALLIES I COULDN'T HOPE TO WIN! IT MIGHT BE A GOOD IDEA FOR ME TO LEAVE THEBES AT THAT! I COULD SAIL TO EGYPT-- THEY SAY THE EGYPTIANS HAVE SOME FINE ANIMAL TRAINERS!

VERY WELL, HERCULES! I'LL ***LEAVE THE THRONE!*** THAT SHOULD MAKE OUR GREAT SAGE CREON HAPPY! HE ALWAYS DISAPPROVED OF ME!

HE THINKS AND ACTS LIKE A MADMAN!

JUST THEN, IN THE TIGER PIT...

THOSE PEOPLE? WHO ARE THEY?

PRISONERS! THAT DOOR LEADS TO THE ***TOWER OF TIGERS!*** IF THEY TRY TO ESCAPE, THEY MEET THE SAME FATE AS THE ANIMAL TRAINER!

THE NEXT DAY ETEOCLES VISITS THE HOME OF HERCULES IN THEBES...

HERE, HERCULES! TAKE THIS TREATY TO MY BROTHER FOR HIS SIGNATURE! TELL HIM I'LL DO AS HE ASKS-- ***FOR THE PRESENT!***

I'LL START OUT ***AT ONCE,*** ETEOCLES!

AND THIS IS YOUR WIFE ***JOLE?*** I'VE HEARD MUCH OF HER! DOES SHE GO WITH YOU?

NO! ***CREON*** WILL STAY TO GUARD HER UNTIL I GET HOME!

SO JOLE REMAINS, EH? EXCELLENT! THEN, IF HERCULES AND POLYNICES TRY ANY TRICKS, I'LL USE HER AS A ***HOSTAGE!***

LATE THAT AFTERNOON ON THE JOURNEY TOWARD POLYNICES' CAMP...

THIS SPRING LOOKS LIKE A GOOD PLACE TO CAMP! I'LL START A FIRE! YOU GET SOME GAME!

DON'T WORRY! I WON'T COME BACK EMPTY-HANDED!

BUT AS HERCULES DRINKS HE SEEMS TO HEAR A WARNING ECHO...

THESE ARE THE **WATERS OF FORGETFULNESS!** YOU WHO DRINK OF THEM WILL FORGET ALL-- **EVERY-THING!**

MY HEAD! IT'S SPINNING! WHERE AM I? WHO--

HERCULES! **WHAT'S WRONG? HERCULES!**

MOMENTS LATER, **ANOTHER** SURPRISE...

SOLDIERS! STRANGERS! I'D BETTER GUARD MY TONGUE UNTIL I FIND OUT **WHO** THEY ARE AND **WHAT** THEY WANT!

ALL RIGHT! WHO IS THIS MAN? AND WHO ARE YOU?

UHHH! UHHHH!

LOOKS TO ME LIKE THE BOY IS A DEAF-MUTE!

THIS ONE SHOULD BE A FINE ADDITION TO OUR QUEEN'S **COLLECTION!** PUT HIM ON THE LITTER! WE'LL TAKE HIM BACK WITH US!

QUEEN OMPHALE WILL BE PLEASED!

FILL THE *LEATHER SKINS* AT THE SPRING OF FORGET-FULNESS AND FOLLOW US TO THE *SHIP!*

YES, COMMANDER SANDONE!

SPRING OF FORGETFUL-NESS! SO *THAT'S* IT!

HOIST THE SAIL! WE MUST BE BACK AT THE ISLAND OF LYDIA BY TOMORROW! QUEEN *OMPHALE* WILL BE *WAITING!*

THE NEXT NIGHT...ON THE MYSTERIOUS ISLAND KINGDOM OF LYDIA...

THIS IS HERCULES THE THEBAN, YOUR HIGHNESS! AND HIS SERVANT, A POOR DEAF-MUTE!

YOU HAVE CHOSEN WELL, SANDONE! HE SHOULD MAKE A HANDSOME KING FOR LYDIA! NOW TAKE THEM TO THEIR QUARTERS!

AS FOR THIS ONE-- HE IS OF *NO FURTHER USE! TAKE HIM* AND DO WHAT MUST BE DONE!

OMPHALE! YOU CAN'T DO THIS! YOU TOLD ME *I* WAS THE *KING!*-- THAT *I* WOULD SHARE YOUR THRONE!

IT IS MORNING WHEN HERCULES WAKES FROM HIS STUPOR! HE IS BROUGHT BEFORE THE QUEEN...

YOUR HIGHNESS, PLEASE! CAN'T YOU HELP ME? I *DON'T REMEMBER* WHO I AM--OR HOW I CAME HERE! I CAN'T REMEMBER *ANYTHING!*

AND IS THAT SO IMPORTANT?

COME, SIT BESIDE ME! DO YOU KNOW THIS BOY?

NO! I'VE NEVER SEEN HIM BEFORE IN MY LIFE!

HE IS YOUR SERVANT, AND YOU-- ARE THE KING OF THIS ISLAND-- YOU SHARE THE THRONE *WITH ME! YOUR QUEEN!*

STRANGE! I CAN'T REMEMBER!

COME ON, YOU! YOU'RE GOING BACK TO YOUR CELL UNTIL YOU ARE NEEDED!

THEY KEEP GIVING HIM THE WATER OF FORGET-FULNESS TO DRINK! I'VE GOT TO DO SOMETHING-- FIND SOME WAY TO HELP HIM!

THE NEXT DAY AT DAWN...

THIS PIGEON-- IT IS TRAINED TO CARRY MESSAGES BACK TO ITHACA, MY HOMELAND! *THAT NOTE* ATTACHED TO ITS LEG SHOULD WARN MY FATHER LAERTES WE'RE IN *TROUBLE!*

SUDDENLY...

COME ON, YOU! IT'S MORNING! TO *WORK!* YOUR *MASTER* IS WAITING!

UHHHH!

SANDONE, CAPTAIN OF THE QUEEN'S GUARD! THANK THE GODS HE DIDN'T SEE ME RELEASE THAT PIGEON!

SOON AFTER IN HERCULES' CHAMBER...

THOSE LEATHER SKINS! I KNOW THEM! THOSE GIRLS ARE *DRUGGING* HERCULES WITH THE *WATERS OF FORGETFULNESS!*

UHHH!

NEVER HAVE I SEEN A SERVANT SO CLUMSY!

HSST! QUIET, HERCULES! I'LL GET YOU SOME FRESH WATER IN A MOMENT!

WHAT WAS THAT NAME YOU CALLED ME? HERCULES!

YES, YOU ARE HERCULES! TRY TO REMEMBER! JOLE! ETEOCLES! POLYNICES! OUR MISSION WITH THE TREATY--

GO AWAY! I CAN'T UNDERSTAND ANYTHING YOU SAY!

OMPHALE! I'D BETTER STAY OUT OF SIGHT! I DON'T WANT HER TO SUSPECT ANYTHING!

AH, MY CONSORT! YOU ARE AWAKE AT LAST!

THE NEXT DAY, FAR ACROSS THE SEA IN ITHACA...

LAERTES, THAT PIGEON CARRIED A MESSAGE! MY HEART TELLS ME IT WAS FROM ULYSSES!

YOU'RE RIGHT, PENELOPE! HERCULES AND ULYSSES ARE IN TROUBLE!

I'LL GO AT ONCE! ALL OF HERCULES' FRIENDS WILL HELP!

HURRY, LAERTES, HURRY! I KNOW THEY'RE IN SOME TERRIBLE DANGER!

AND HERCULES' FRIENDS ANSWER THE CALL...

AND AS THE VALIANT SHIP, **ARGOS** SETS SAIL...

ROW SWIFTLY! HERCULES AND ULYSSES ARE IN DANGER! EVERY MOMENT COUNTS!

MEANWHILE IN THE ROYAL PALACE AT THEBES...

THREE DAYS HAVE PASSED AND NO WORD FROM HERCULES! I SAY HE IS PLOTTING WITH POLYNICES TO DESTROY ME!

OUR SPIES REPORT THE ARGIVES ARE GATHERING FOR BATTLE. I HAVE SEEN THEIR TROOP CONCENTRATIONS WITH MY OWN EYES!

BUT HERCULES WOULD **NEVER** BETRAY YOU! HE KNOWS YOU'D TAKE JOLE AS **HOSTAGE!**

I'VE GOT A **SURPRISE** FOR YOU, CREON!

BRING IN THE WOMAN!

THERE'S YOUR **JOLE!** MY MEN CAUGHT HER TRYING TO LEAVE THE CITY TO JOIN HERCULES!

CREON, I HADN'T HEARD FROM HERCULES FOR DAYS! I WAS WORRIED! I WAS GOING TO **SEARCH** FOR HIM!

AND YOU EXPECT ME TO BELIEVE THAT STORY?

TAKE HER AWAY! ARREST ALL THEBANS SUSPECTED OF PLOTTING WITH POLYNICES! YOU CAN START WITH **CREON!**

IN THE DISTANT PALACE OF OMPHALE, ULYSSES WATCHES HIS FRIEND...

THE **WATERS OF FORGETFULNESS!** OMPHALE'S SERVANTS ARE POURING ANOTHER GOBLET FOR HERCULES!

OH! EXCUSE ME!

YOU KNOCKED OVER MY GOBLET ***AGAIN!*** YOU GROW ***CLUMSIER*** EACH DAY, BOY!

I DO IT FOR ***YOU,*** HERCULES! DON'T DRINK THAT WATER THEY'RE GIVING YOU! THAT'S THE ONLY WAY YOU'LL RECOVER YOUR MEMORY! THEN, WHEN WE ESCAPE--

ESCAPE? BUT THIS IS YOUR NATIVE LAND, ISN'T IT?

LISTEN! MY NAME IS ***ULYSSES!*** THE QUEEN'S MEN CAPTURED US, BROUGHT US HERE! WE ***MUST ESCAPE!*** I SAW SOMETHING HERE THAT MADE MY BLOOD RUN COLD!

"I WAS LOOKING FOR A WAY TO ESCAPE FROM THE PALACE WHEN I SAW THE ENTRANCE TO A GROTTO."

"WHAT I SAW INSIDE WAS ***UNBELIEVABLE...***"

STATUES OF MEN -- THEY'RE SO REAL, THEY ALMOST LOOK ***ALIVE!***

"THEN, DEEPER IN THE CAVE, I SAW ***OMPHALE*** -- AND AN ***EGYPTIAN!***"

THERE YOU ARE, MY QUEEN! YOUR LAST COURT FAVORITE -- JUST AS HE WAS IN LIFE! EVERY DETAIL ***PERFECT!***

YOU EGYPTIANS ARE SO CLEVER! IT MUST BE EXCITING WORK TO FIX A MAN'S CHARACTER ***FOREVER!***

"BUT JUST BEFORE I SLIPPED AWAY --"

AND WHEN CAN WE EXPECT TO GET TO WORK ON HERCULES?

I-I'LL LET YOU KNOW!

--ΕΡΑΧΑΕΣ--

YOU *MUSTN'T TELL* ANY OF THIS TO THE QUEEN! I FEAR WHAT SHE *PLANS* FOR YOU, HERCULES!

HERCULES-- THAT NAME YOU CALL ME! SOMEHOW IT SOUNDS MORE FAMILIAR NOW!

I SEEM TO REMEMBER SOMETHING! I WAS *STRONG*, THEN...

GOOD! THEN YOUR MEMORY IS BEGINNING TO *RETURN!*

THAT AFTERNOON...

GREAT QUEEN, VOYAGERS HAVE JUST ARRIVED! LAERTES OF ITHACA AND HIS CREW! THEY ARE WAITING TO PRESENT THEIR RESPECTS!

I'LL SEE THEM AT ONCE, SANDONE!

HERCULES, YOU WAIT *HERE!*

BUT EVEN AS ULYSSES HEARS THE EXCITING NEWS...

ALL RIGHT, *YOU!* GET BACK INTO YOUR *CELL!* MY ORDERS ARE TO KEEP YOU *OUT OF SIGHT* WHEN THERE ARE STRANGERS ABOUT!

SOON...

GRACIOUS QUEEN, WE HAVE A PERILOUS VOYAGE AHEAD! ALL WE ASK IS *HOSPITALITY* WHILE WE ARE ON YOUR ISLAND! ACCEPT THESE GIFTS WITH OUR GRATITUDE!

THANK YOU, LAERTES! I'VE GIVEN ORDERS TO HAVE YOU AND YOUR FRIENDS TAKEN TO THE WEST WING OF MY PALACE!

MY THANKS, O QUEEN!

AT THIS MOMENT A TOWERING FIGURE STRIDES INTO THE ROOM...

WAIT! ISN'T THAT *HERCULES?*

WHAT WAS THAT YOU CALLED ME, STRANGER?

BUT I'M *LAERTES!* YOU *CAN'T* MEAN YOU DON'T KNOW ME? WHERE IS MY SON *ULYSSES?*

YOU ARE WRONG, LAERTES! THIS *ISN'T* HERCULES! YOU'RE MISTAKING HIM FOR SOMEONE ELSE!

WHO IS THIS *HERCULES* EVERYONE IS SPEAKING OF?

A *GIANT* AMONG MEN! A BORN FIGHTER -- AND THE *GREATEST MAN* IN THEBES!

SUSPECTING DANGER, THE ARGONAUTS HIDE THEIR SUSPICIONS...

WE THOUGHT YOU WERE OUR FRIEND, BUT WE MUST BE *MISTAKEN!* THERE'S SOME RESEMBLANCE, BUT OUR HERCULES WAS A *MIGHTY HERO* -- AND YOU...

I DON'T LIKE YOUR TALK OR YOUR LAUGHTER!

HA, HA, HA!

I PRAY YOU PARDON HIM, MY GREEK FRIENDS!

AND YOU, MY BELOVED, *GO* NOW! I'LL SEE YOU LATER!

AND WITH YOUR PERMISSION WE, TOO, WOULD LIKE TO RETIRE, O QUEEN!

BUT AS THE ARGONAUTS TURN FROM THE THRONE...

YOU THERE, I THINK I'VE MET YOU BEFORE! STAY A MOMENT WHILE I TRY TO REMEMBER!...WHAT IS YOUR NAME?

THEY CALL ME CASTOR! AT YOUR SERVICE, MY QUEEN!

DAYS PASS! IN DISTANT THEBES, A CRISIS APPROACHES...

THE SIX DAYS HAVE LONG PASSED, POLYNICES, AND STILL NO WORD FROM THEBES! HERCULES AND ETEOCLES ARE CONSPIRING AGAINST YOU!

I'LL BE KING YET, ANFIRAO! YOUR ARGIVE WARRIORS WILL CONQUER THEBES FOR ME!

WITH THOSE NEW SIEGE TOWERS, MY WARRIORS WILL SWARM OVER THE WALLS OF THEBES! THE RICHES OF THE CITY WILL BE OURS!

NEWS OF THE IMPENDING ATTACK COMES TO THEBES...

LOOK DOWN THERE, YOUR HIGHNESS! THE PEOPLE OF THE COUNTRYSIDE ARE CROWDING INTO THE CITY TO TAKE REFUGE FROM THE ARGIVES!

WITHOUT MY PERMISSION? WE HAVE TOO MANY TO FEED IN THEBES ALREADY!

CLOSE THE GATES! ABANDON THOSE CLODS TO THE ENEMY!

NO! LET US IN, OR WE'LL ALL BE DESTROYED!

AND IN THE THEBAN DUNGEONS...

O CREON, WE'LL NEVER GET OUT OF THE TOWER OF TIGERS ALIVE! IF ONLY HERCULES WERE HERE!

BE BRAVE, JOLE! I KNOW THAT SOMEHOW HERCULES WILL FIND A WAY TO HELP US!

BUT IN OMPHALE'S PALACE HERCULES' MEMORY IS SLOW TO RETURN...

THIS HERCULES IS A *MIGHTY HERO!*

HERCULES IS THE *GREATEST MAN* IN *THEBES!*

A BORN *FIGHTER!*

WERE THEY TALKING ABOUT ME?

I MUST SEE THE THE QUEEN! PERHAPS SHE CAN EXPLAIN ALL THIS TO ME!

AT THAT VERY MOMENT ULYSSES HAS MANAGED TO OPEN HIS CELL DOOR...

AH-HA! BY SLIPPING THIS STICK THROUGH THE CRACK IN MY DOOR I CAN LIFT THE BOLT AND...

KREEEK!

SANDONE! HE'S HEARD THE SOUND OF THE DOOR AND HE'S COMING TO INVESTIGATE!

BUT I'M READY FOR HIM!

KLOUT!

SANDONE'S *CLOAK* SHOULD MAKE A GOOD *DISGUISE* WHILE I TRY TO ESCAPE!

MEANWHILE HERCULES HAS ENTERED THE THRONE ROOM WHERE...

OMPHALE, YOU PRETEND TO BE ATTRACTED TO ME, BUT YOU ONLY WANT ME TO TELL YOU WHY WE CAME HERE TO LYDIA!

I *KNOW* WHY YOU CAME HERE, CASTOR! YOU SEEK *HERCULES!*

I PITY YOU, OMPHALE! ONCE HERCULES RECOVERS HIS MEMORY YOU CAN NEVER HOLD HIM HERE!

HERCULES! I CURSE THE DAY HE *ENTERED* THIS PALACE!

SO YOU CURSE THE DAY I CAME HERE? NOW I BEGIN TO PULL THE THREADS TOGETHER... *AT LAST* I KNOW WHO I *REALLY* AM!

HERCULES!

I DID IT BECAUSE I LOVED YOU! I LOVE YOU MORE THAN JOLE EVER COULD!

I'LL SPARE YOUR LIFE -- BUT YOU DON'T DESERVE IT! I'M LEAVING THIS ISLAND AT ONCE!

THE QUEEN'S PLEADING IS IN VAIN... AND SOON...

LET IT BE AS YOU WISH, HERCULES! NOW, REJOIN YOUR FRIENDS! I WILL SEE THAT YOU GET AWAY FROM MY ISLAND SAFELY!

AS HERCULES' COMPANIONS REJOICE IN THE REUNION...

THANK THE GODS THAT HERCULES IS *ALIVE!* BUT WHAT OF MY SON *ULYSSES?*

IF HE'S AMONG THE LIVING, HE'LL GET TO US SOMEHOW!

IN THE NEXT INSTANT AN ANGRY SOLDIER RUSHES IN....

SANDONE! THE CAPTAIN OF MY GUARDS! THEN, WHO IS THIS?

THAT'S HERCULES' SERVANT BRAT! HE AMBUSHED ME IN THE DUNGEON AND STOLE MY CLOAK!

YOU! I'VE GOT A SCORE TO SETTLE BEFORE YOU LEAVE!

IT'S ULYSSES! ULYSSES, MY SON!

HERCULES IS INSTANTLY READY FOR BATTLE...

CUT THEM DOWN! SPARE NO ONE BUT HERCULES!

AND AS ULYSSES' SWORD STRIKES HOME...

THIS WAY, ULYSSES!

BUT AT THE PALACE GATES...

HERCULES! WE'RE CUT OFF!

WE'RE NOT FINISHED YET!

CRASH!

HE HAS THE STRENGTH OF THE GODS!

THEY HAVE EVERY GATE FROM THE PALACE *BLOCKED!* ULYSSES, WHAT ABOUT THAT *CAVE* YOU TOLD ME ABOUT?

IT'S THIS WAY, HERCULES! THROUGH THAT UNDERBRUSH!

SO, IT *WASN'T* ALL YOUR IMAGINATION, ULYSSES!

I *TOLD* YOU, HERCULES, BUT YOU WOULDN'T *BELIEVE* ME!

ALL THE QUEEN'S OLD FAVORITES -- TURNED TO *LIVING STONE!*

AND THIS PEDESTAL WAS WAITING FOR *YOU*, HERCULES!

LOOK UP THERE! THERE'S LIGHT COMING THROUGH! IT MUST BE A WAY OUT OF THIS GROTTO!

THAT DOOR! IT'S *CLOSING!*

HERCULES' MIGHTY SINEWS HOLD THE DOORS APART...

ALL RIGHT, HERCULES! WE ALL GOT THROUGH SAFELY! YOU CAN LET GO NOW!

LOOK THERE! WE'RE FREE AT LAST!

THE SEA! THE *SEA!*

AND THERE'S THE ARGOS *WAITING* FOR US!

SCON, ABOARD THE ARGOS...

HERCULES, YOU WERE IMPRISONED ON THAT ISLAND FOR TWENTY DAYS! WE'LL HAVE TO MOVE *QUICKLY!*

TWENTY DAYS! THEN THE TIME LIMIT WAS UP *LONG AGO!* POLYNICES IS PROBABLY ATTACKING THEBES RIGHT NOW! AND *JOLE* IS IN THE HANDS OF THAT MADMAN *ETEOCLES!*

HOIST SAIL! MAKE *ALL SPEED* TO THE SHORES OF *THEBES!*

THE NEXT DAY BEFORE THE WALLS OF THEBES...

IN THE NAME OF JUSTICE I ***DEMAND*** THE ***SURRENDER*** OF THEBES! TO THE FOLLOWERS OF ETEOCLES I GUARANTEE THEIR PROPERTY AND CIVIL RIGHTS! AS FOR ETEOCLES, HE WILL BE SENT INTO ***EXILE!***

HEAR ME, POLYNICES! I WILL NEVER SURRENDER THE CITY TO A TRAITOR WHO HIRES ALIENS TO FIGHT AGAINST THEBES!

AS FOR YOUR ***ACCOMPLICE, HERCULES***--I HOLD HIS FAMILY AND FRIENDS AS ***PRISONERS!*** THEY SHALL REMAIN IN THE ***TOWER OF TIGERS*** UNTIL I WIN VICTORY!

TWO NIGHTS LATER HERCULES ARRIVES ON THE THEBAN SHORE...

IT'S TRUE! THEBES LIES UNDER SIEGE! THEY SAY THAT JOLE AND ALL YOUR FAMILY ARE IN PRISON IN THE TOWER OF TIGERS!

IF THAT MADMAN HARMS MY FAMILY OR FRIENDS, I'LL...

HERCULES, DON'T RETURN TO THEBES! THEY SAY ETEOCLES HAS SET A TRAP FOR YOU! HE PLANS TO THROW YOUR WIFE TO THE TIGERS BEFORE YOUR VERY EYES!

I MUST FIND SOME WAY ***INTO THE CITY!*** I ***MUST*** SAVE JOLE AND MY LOVED ONES BEFORE ETEOCLES ***DESTROYS*** THEM ALL!

THE NEXT MORNING POLYNICES PLANS FOR THE COMING BATTLE...

HAVE NO FEAR, ANFIRAO! WHEN WE ATTACK, MY SUPPORTERS IN THE CITY WILL **REVOLT** AND HELP US!

DON'T BE A **FOOL**, POLYNICES! MY SPIES TELL ME YOUR FRIENDS ARE EITHER ELIMINATED OR **IMPRISONED!**

JUST THEN...

AN **EMISSARY** FROM THEBES, YOUR HIGHNESS! HE BRINGS A **MESSAGE!**

SO ETEOCLES IS READY TO COME TO TERMS, EH? ALL RIGHT! SEND HIM IN!

POLYNICES, ETEOCLES OFFERS TO SETTLE THE RULE OF THEBES IN SINGLE COMBAT! JUST YOU AND HE ALONE!

A DUEL? NOT A BAD IDEA! I COULD LOSE A THIRD OF MY MEN IN AN ASSAULT ON THE CITY!

POLYNICES, WE THEBANS ARE WEARY OF QUARRELS AND BLOODSHED! LET THIS DUEL SETTLE YOUR DIFFERENCES-- UNLESS YOU'RE **AFRAID!**

I DO NOT FEAR ETEOCLES! I ACCEPT THE CHALLENGE!

BUT WHAT IF YOU ARE **KILLED**, POLYNICES? WILL YOUR ARGIVE MERCENARIES **LEAVE** OUR CITY AND RETURN HOMEWARD?

CERTAINLY! YOU HAVE MY **WORD!** WE ARGIVES ARE MEN OF **HONOR!**

MEANWHILE HERCULES HAS FOUND AN UNGUARDED SPOT IN THE WALLS OF THEBES...

THAT STREAM FLOWS UNDER THE CITY WALL! THAT COULD BE OUR CHANCE, IF WE CAN PRY APART THE BARS IN THAT GATE!

LET ME GO FIRST! I'LL TAKE CARE OF THAT GATE!

DEEP BENEATH THE SURFACE, OUT OF SIGHT OF HIDDEN SENTRIES...

THEN, ONE BY ONE, HIS COMPANIONS FOLLOW...

BUT WHERE'S HERCULES? HE'S ***NOWHERE IN SIGHT!***

NO TIME TO WORRY ABOUT HERCULES NOW! HERE COME SOME OF ETEOCLES SOLDIERS!

MAKE SHORT WORK OF THEM! QUICKLY, WE MUST FIND HERCULES!

BUT AT THAT MOMENT...

THIS GATE--IT LOOKS LIKE AN ENTRANCE INTO ETEOCLES' PALACE!

HA, HA, HA!

THE *TIGER PIT!* *I'M TRAPPED!*

KLANGGG!

AND NOW LET'S SEE HOW STRONG THE MIGHTY HERCULES *REALLY* IS! RELEASE THE *FIRST* TIGER!

ARRRR!

BUT NOT EVEN THE TIGER IS A MATCH FOR THE SINEWS OF THE MIGHTY HERCULES...

KRRRUNCH!

BAH! THAT WAS AN ACCIDENT! RELEASE THE SECOND TIGER!

YARRRRR!

AS HERCULES GRAPPLES WITH THE SECOND TIGER!

ONE TIGER AT A TIME IS TOO EASY! RELEASE THE THIRD TIGER!

SECONDS LATER, HELP ARRIVES...

HERCULES! HE'S DOWN THERE!

ULYSSES! THANK THE GODS YOU CAME IN TIME!

NOW TO OPEN THE DOOR OF THE *PRISON!*

BAMM!

HERCULES! I *KNEW* THE FATES WOULD NOT DESERT US!

MY GOOD FRIEND *CREON!* WHERE IS *JOLE?* I DO NOT SEE HER HERE!

JOLE ESCAPED! WE MANAGED TO BRIBE A GUARD! SHE SAID SHE WAS GOING TO SLIP OUT OF THE CITY AND LOOK FOR YOU!

BUT THE ARGIVE ARMY IS *EVERYWHERE* OUTSIDE THE WALLS! PRAY THE GODS SHE HAS *ESCAPED* THEM!

BUT EVEN AT THAT MOMENT IN THE ARGIVE CAMP...

AH, MY LOVELY JOLE! YOU MAY HAVE BEEN SMART ENOUGH TO ESCAPE FROM *ETEOCLES*-- BUT MY ARGIVE SENTRIES WERE TOO SHARP-EYED FOR YOU!

YOU'LL REGRET THIS, ANFIRAO!

I HAVEN'T FORGOTTEN HOW HERCULES STRUCK ME WHEN WE FIRST MET! I'LL REVENGE MYSELF THROUGH YOU, JOLE!

A COWARD'S REVENGE, WORTHY ONLY OF AN ARGIVE!

JUST THEN...

TARRRRAH!

READY YOURSELF FOR *BATTLE*, POLYNICES! HERE COMES YOUR BROTHER, ETEOCLES!

TARRRAHHH!

THE DUEL HAS BEGUN, ANFIRAO!

I'LL BE BACK LATER, JOLE! AFTER THOSE THEBAN FOOLS HAVE DESTROYED EACH OTHER!

MEANWHILE HERCULES HAS REACHED THE CITY WALL WHERE...

WHAT'S GOING ON DOWN THERE?

ETEOCLES AND POLYNICES! THEY'RE FIGHTING IN *SINGLE COMBAT* FOR THE *THRONE* OF THEBES!

IN THE SAVAGE HAND TO HAND BATTLE BOTH BROTHERS ARE DANGEROUSLY WOUNDED... THEN--

POLYNICES *FALLS!*

BUT *ETEOCLES* IS STAGGERING, TOO!

THEBANS! SPREAD THE NEWS! ETEOCLES ... HAS *WON* THE DAY!

ETEOCLES... IS ... *VICTORIOUS!*

AND NOW THAT THEY ARE BOTH DEAD, OPPORTUNITY BECKONS TO ME! THEBES IS MINE FOR THE TAKING!

HERCULES! LOOK WELL - AT THIS *CLOAK!* IT BELONGS TO *JOLE!* SHE'S IN MY TENT NOW AWAITING THE *VICTORY* I WILL WIN OVER THE THEBANS THIS DAY!

GET TO YOUR *POSTS!* ADVANCE THE SIEGE TOWERS TO THE WALLS! FORWARD TO THE GATES WITH THE BATTERING-RAM!

LOOK THERE! THE THEBANS HAVE LEFT THE WALLS! THEY'VE ABANDONED THEIR DEFENSES!

THEY'RE PROBABLY PREPARING TO SURRENDER!

BUT IN THE NEXT INSTANT THE GATES SWING OPEN AND...

HERCULES! *AND THE THEBAN CHARIOTS!*

IN YENGEFUL FURY THE THEBANS ATTACK THE ARGIVE HOST...

RUN! RUN, OR WE'LL ALL BE DESTROYED!

FORWARD, THEBANS!

AS THE ARGIVES RETREAT IN DISORDER...

THOSE SIEGE TOWERS ARE OUR ONLY CHANCE! ORDER OUR ARCHERS TO SHOOT DOWN ON THE THEBANS!

AT ONCE, COMMANDER ANFIRAO!

HERCULES! THOSE ARGIVE BOWMEN WILL STOP THE ATTACK UNLESS--

I HAVE THE ANSWER FOR THAT, ULYSSES!

THIS GRAPPLING HOOK SHOULD DO THE TASK!

AND AS HERCULES' MASSIVE SHOULDERS HAUL AT THE LINE...

THE TOWER! IT'S GOING OVER!

EEEEYAH!

CHUNNKKK!

HERCULES! YOU'VE BROKEN THE BACK OF THEIR ATTACK!

IT'S OUR COMMANDER, ANFIRAO! HE WAS TRAPPED BY THE FALLING TOWER!

THEN THE BATTLE IS OVER! AND WE ARE LOST!

THE ARGIVES ARE DEFEATED! THEY'RE FLEEING FOR THEIR LIVES!

QUICKLY! TO THE ARGIVE CAMP! WE'VE GOT TO FIND JOLE!

THAT NIGHT ON THE BATTLEFIELD...

AND SO THE FATES TOOK THEIR REVENGE ON THE SONS OF OEDIPUS! AND NOW MAY OUR CITY BE PURIFIED BY THESE FLAMES-- THE BURNING SYMBOL OF OUR VICTORY AND OUR LOVE FOR FREEDOM!

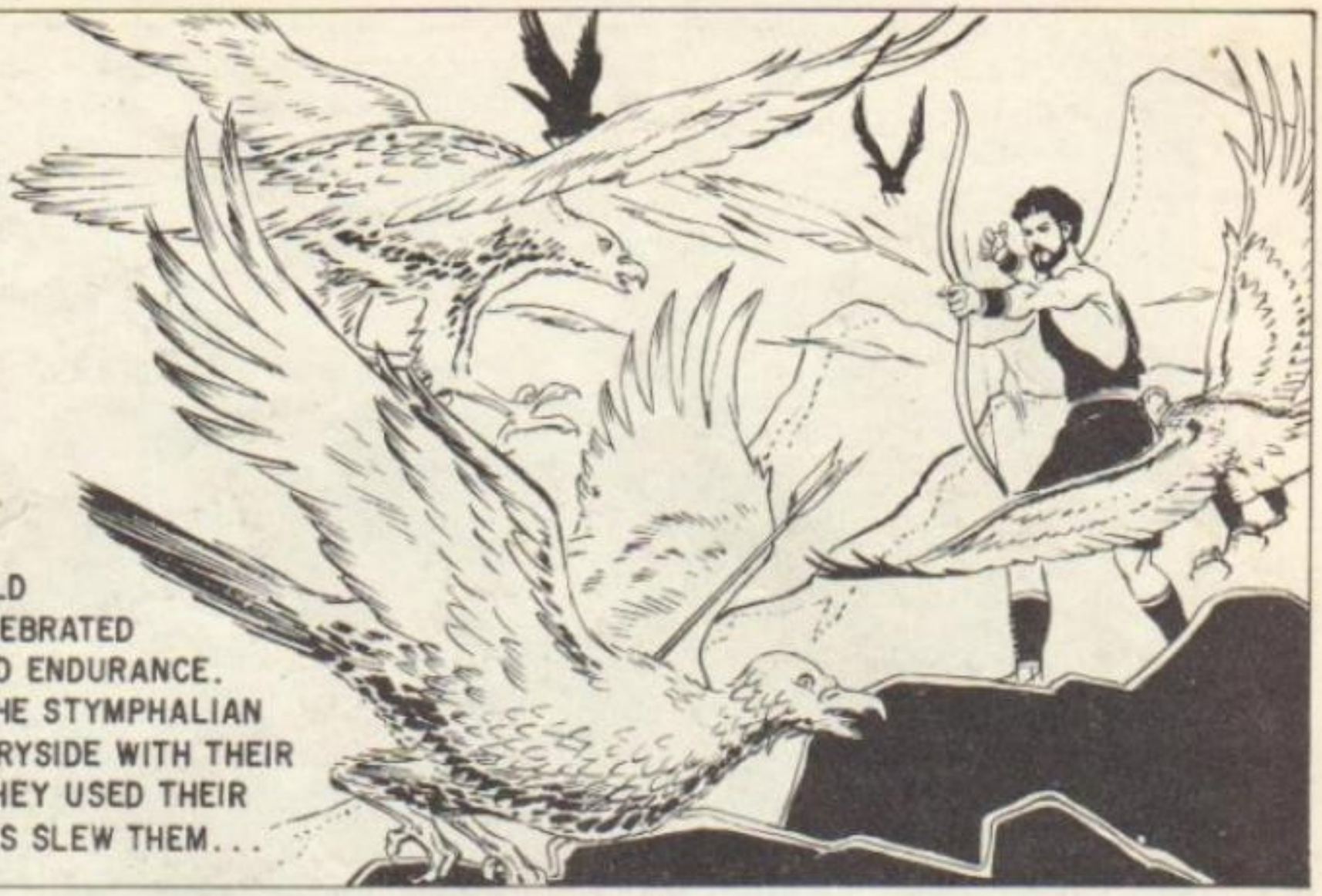
JOLE, YOU'VE GONE THROUGH SO MUCH— THE FATES HAVE PLACED MANY TRIALS IN OUR PATH! BUT PERHAPS NOW...

I DO NOT FEAR FOR THE FUTURE, HERCULES-- AS LONG AS YOU ARE THERE TO SHARE IT WITH ME!

A PLEDGE DELL COMIC TO PARENTS

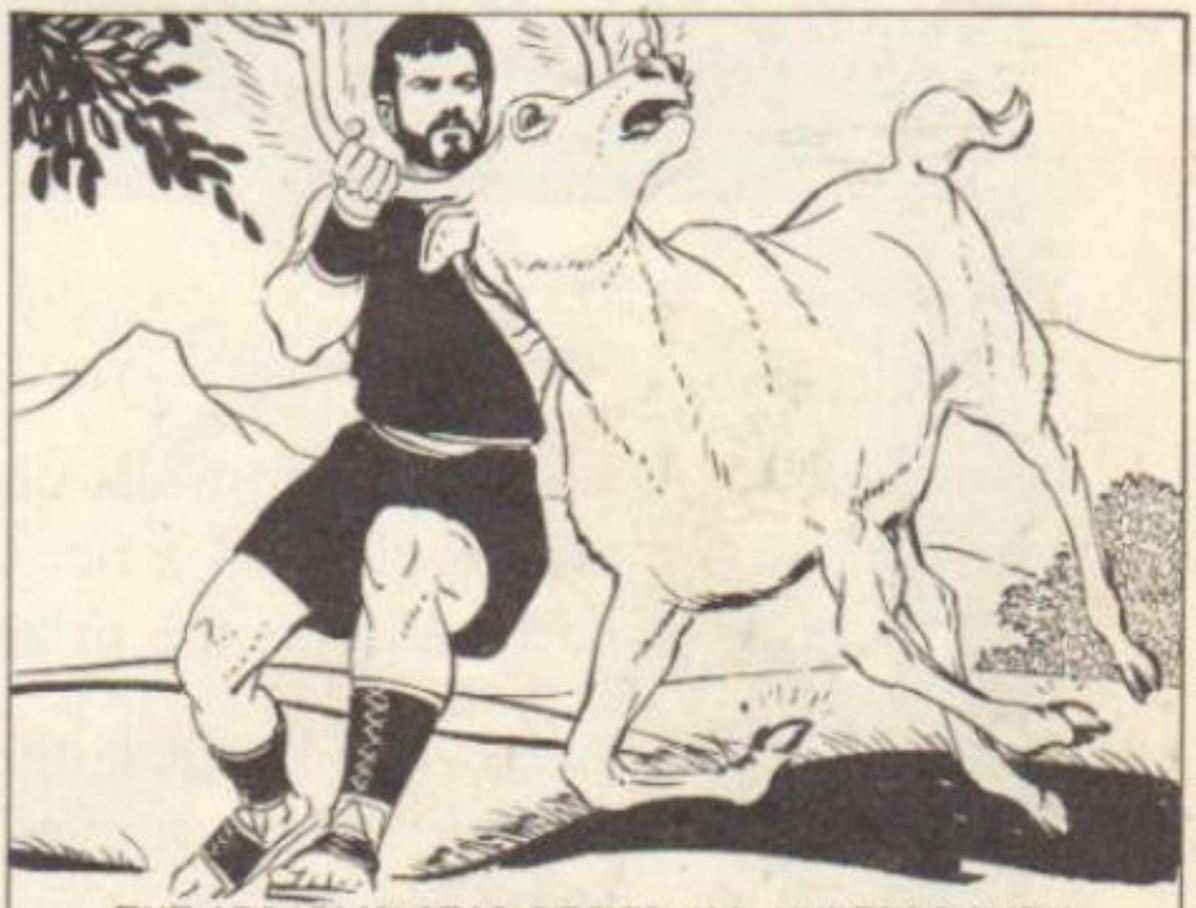
The Dell Trademark is, and always has been, a positive guarantee that the comic magazine bearing it contains only clean and wholesome entertainment. The Dell code eliminates entirely, rather than regulates, objectionable material. That's why when your child buys a Dell Comic you can be sure it contains only good fun. "DELL COMICS ARE GOOD COMICS" *is our only credo and constant goal.*

The Feats of Hercules



THROUGHOUT THE ANCIENT WORLD THE MIGHTY HERCULES WAS CELEBRATED FOR HIS FEATS OF STRENGTH AND ENDURANCE. HE WAS ORDERED TO DESTROY THE STYMPHALIAN BIRDS WHO RAVAGED THE COUNTRYSIDE WITH THEIR CLAWS AND BEAKS... THOUGH THEY USED THEIR FEATHERS FOR ARROWS, HERCULES SLEW THEM...

SINGLE HANDED, HE CARRIED THE FEROCIOUS THREE-HEADED DOG CERBERUS OUT OF HADES INTO THE UPPER WORLD...



THE ARCADIAN STAG DEFIED ALL HUNTERS WITH ITS GOLDEN ANTLERS AND BRAZEN HOOFS! BUT HERCULES PURSUED IT FOR A WHOLE YEAR--- AND CAPTURED IT!

WHEN ERYMANTHUS WAS LAID WASTE BY A HUGE WILD BOAR, HERCULES CAPTURED THE CREATURE WITH A NET.

WHEN THE MONSTROUS GIGANTES ATTACKED OLYMPUS, THE GODS THEMSELVES CALLED HERCULES TO HELP THEM DESTROY THE TITANIC CREATURES.

Before the walls of Thebes two mighty armies clash in a fierce struggle—with Hercules' native city as the prize!

And while brother fights against brother for one throne, a cynical mercenary waits to pick up the pieces of a shattered kingdom.

Then the mighty Hercules breaks out of the *Tower of Tigers* to fight for his country's freedom.